

NEWS • News

Coronavirus crisis leaves at least 12,000 South Bay workers jobless



FILE – In this March 13, 2020 file photo, unionized hospitality workers wait in line in a basement garage to apply for unemployment benefits at the Hospitality Training Academy in Los Angeles. More than 6.6 million Americans applied for unemployment benefits last week, far exceeding a record high set just last week, a sign that layoffs are accelerating in the midst of the coronavirus. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez, File)

By **TYLER SHAUN EVAINS** | tevains@scng.com |

PUBLISHED: April 13, 2020 at 5:39 p.m. | UPDATED: April 13, 2020 at 5:39 p.m.

In the interest of public safety, critical coronavirus coverage is being provided free to all readers. Support reporting like this with a subscription to Daily Breeze. Only 99¢ for a 4-week trial.

Support local journalism

The South Bay Workforce Investment Board knows about 12,000 people in the area who have been laid off since March 1 amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, about 80 times more than this time last year, officials said Monday, April 13.

Of those, 2,000 have come into the investment board since Friday, said Jan Vogel, the organization's executive director.

The investment board — which, this time last year, knew of about 150 people who had lost their jobs — supports job retention and creation, and economic growth in the South Bay 11 cities.

The current 12,000 number, however, "doesn't really reflect the total amount of layoffs in the area," Vogel said.

Businesses that are about to lay off at least 500 workers or have 50 or more employees are required to send notices to the investment board, Vogel said. If a business has less than 50 people working in it, he added, the board wouldn't receive word of those layoffs.

"That gives you an idea of the magnitude of what people are dealing with," Vogel said.

A record [16.8 million people](#) in the U.S. have filed for unemployment assistance as of last week because of economic strains the coronavirus has caused.

The influx of layoff notices and the public's challenge in [applying for unemployment insurance](#), Vogel said, are currently the organization's biggest issues. They've gotten many calls about not being able to access the U.S. Department of Labor over the phone because of a "tremendous load" of people calling simultaneously.

In fact, investment board has received so many calls itself that the the call center in the unemployment development department is [hiring](#) more people to handle the new workload, Vogel said.

The board is currently operating with a skeleton crew because of social distancing guidelines, with minimal staff working in the investment board's offices on a rotating basis, Vogel said; it only takes walk-in appointments one at a time from 8 to 11 a.m. The line is especially long at the Inglewood location, he added.

The organization's four [One-Stop career centers](#) are open, Vogel said, but are conducting appointments mostly over the phone and by email.

"A lot of people still want to go to school," Vogel said, so the investment board still offers training remotely. But that doesn't allow as many people as the board could train during in-person classes.

Some companies, meanwhile — like FedEx, Amazon, Home Depot and Northgate Market — are actually hiring more than normal because they are deemed essential businesses, Vogel said, but not at the same rate as people are being let go.

Hopefully, Vogel said, once people get their unemployment checks, they'll be OK for a while and can live a "new normal" when the crisis ends.

Information on the new federal stimulus package is supposed to come to the state level this week, Vogel said, and could allow those who applied for unemployment insurance to get up to an additional \$600 per week for up to four months — on top of the insurance of about \$450 per week.

Those who haven't applied for unemployment insurance and want to get the potential stimulus package would have to follow a different, to-be-determined procedure, he said.

[Sign up](#) for The Localist, our daily email newsletter with handpicked stories relevant to where you live. [Subscribe here](#).

[Newsroom Guidelines](#)

[News Tips](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Report an Error](#)



The Trust Project

Tags: [Coronavirus](#), [economy](#), [Top Stories Breeze](#)



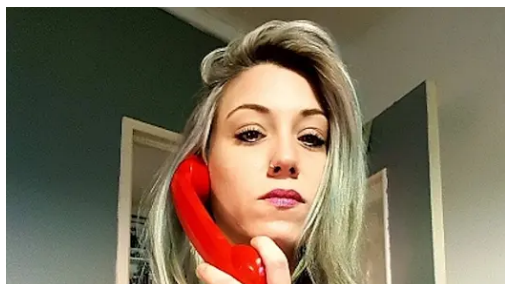
Tyler Shaun Evains | Reporter

Tyler Evains is a reporter covering Manhattan Beach and El Segundo for The Beach Reporter and the Daily Breeze. She was previously a news assistant with the San Gabriel Valley

Newsgroup. She received her Bachelor's from University of La Verne where she was the editorial director and arts editor for the Campus Times, staff writer for La Verne Magazine and staff photographer for both publications. She also helped charter the first traditionally African-American sorority at ULV, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. in 2017. Tyler served as the historian and social media manager for ULV's chapter of the organization.

tevains@scng.com

Follow Tyler Shaun Evains @TylerShaunE



SPONSORED CONTENT

Make These 5 Moves ASAP If Your Credit Score is Under 700

By The Penny Hoarder



Yup — you've got some algorithm spitting out a three-digit number that's basically controlling your entire life. We...

VIEW COMMENTS

Join the Conversation

We invite you to use our commenting platform to engage in insightful conversations about issues in our community. Although we do not pre-screen comments, we reserve the right at all times to remove any information or materials that are unlawful, threatening, abusive, libelous, defamatory, obscene, vulgar, pornographic, profane, indecent or otherwise objectionable to us, and to disclose any information necessary to satisfy the law, regulation, or government request. We might permanently block any user who abuses these conditions.

If you see comments that you find offensive, please use the “Flag as Inappropriate” feature by hovering over the right side of the post, and pulling down on the arrow that appears. Or, contact our editors by emailing moderator@scng.com.